

Dubois 12/9/2014 Public Meeting Comments

Group 1

ATVs

- *Increase fines and have stiffer penalties. Potentially impact hunting and/or access privileges

This is a good idea and something that needs to be presented and advocated by the general public.

Allow game retrieval off road

- Don't allow game retrieval off road
- Maintain education efforts but don't rely on education to solve the problem
- *More signage. Painted posts, trees, or other indestructible objects to indicate road closures
- *The agencies responsible for the land need to 'step up' and enforce more

All of these concerns/thoughts and recommendations will be supplied to the BLM, USFS and Trails Program.

2014 Seasons and 2015 Recommendations

- Too many elk HA 67 tags
 - o Remove 100 from Type 4
 - o Remove 200 from Type 6

The 2015 proposal is to reduce Type 4 licenses by 100 and Type 6 licenses by 100.

- Open HA 67 Type 6 to all of hunt area

The intent of these tags is to focus harvest on elk moving onto winter range from the west. This should continue to be the focus of the licenses. Hunters who desire access to the entire hunt area or like to hunt along the East Fork should be aware of this restriction by now and should apply for a Type 4 license.

- HA 68 split season?
- Deer HA 128 APR 3pt or better

Two years ago we shortened the October, general season as well as cut back on Type 1 licenses. These changes were intended to improve buck quality some in the area during the November season. The Department would like to assess the impacts of these changes over a few years before making more changes. Also, many hunters in October simply want the opportunity to recreate and harvest any deer. A 3pt or better restriction significantly reduces their recreational opportunities. It is important to remember this deer herd is managed for recreational opportunity not trophy quality.

- Likes later general seasons. Feels better about them with an APR
- Like the spikes excluded season

This restriction is proposed again for the 2015 season

Bears, Wolves, and Lions

- *Need to spread/make available more information about bear/human conflicts and success of recoveries

The Department/Region is working on this and we provide a lot of information about Large Carnivores on our website and Regional Newsletters.

- *Need to more information about impacts of bears on other wildlife

There are several monitoring efforts going on right now and it is clear some areas/populations see more of an impact than others even with similar densities of bears and other wildlife.

- Bring national attention and awareness of bear and wolf conflicts. Especially to nonresident hunters

The Department/Region is working on this and we provide a lot of information about Large Carnivores on our website and Regional Newsletters.

- Promote cleaner campsites /secured food

All of the agencies involved continue to try to get the message out and have good compliance in general.

Group 2

ATVs

- An official travel management process has never happened
- Fear of grizzly bears
- Hunting and fishing pressure moved to front country instead of back country
- *Increase education to outside states that grizzly bears have reached capacity
- *Use the Wyoming Outfitters Magazine to get info to out of state hunters about ATV and bear issues
- *Make penalty severe
- Better signage
- More enforcement

All of these concerns/thoughts and recommendations will be supplied to the BLM, USFS and Trails Program.

2014 Seasons and 2015 Recommendations

- Issue with Type 9 Archery causing loss of 15 days of hunting with a general tag
This issue has come up for a number of years. The Department continues to hear from advocates of maintaining the Type 9 season structure as is as well as people interested in expanding general license archery hunting. Last year regional personnel decided there would never be complete agreement between different advocates and opted to leave the archery season structure unchanged. This still

allows general elk license holders 47 days to hunt in areas 67, 68, and 69. Further, general license holders have a full 4 months of hunting opportunity including areas west of Togwotee Pass and within the WRR. These areas are all within a 30 mile drive of Dubois. The Department does not believe there is a lack of opportunity to hunt with a general license near Dubois.

- More areas of Type 9 tags for all species
- *HA 67 Type 6 is too small, make it the entire area
 - o Trespass issues
 - o Hunter crowding

The intent of these tags is to focus harvest on elk moving onto winter range from the west. This should continue to be the focus of the licenses. Hunters who desire access to the entire hunt area or like to hunt along the East Fork should be aware of this restriction by now and should apply for a Type 4 license.

- Increase PLPW areas around Dubois

Some increased access to certain areas during the late, antlerless elk season would be nice. In general, the Department is likely to continue focusing PLPW efforts in other areas more heavily dominated by private lands.

- Let spikes excluded season run for at least 3 years

This restriction is proposed again for the 2015 season and we will evaluate it after this season.

- *Deer

- o Like the doe whitetail option
- o 3pt or better APR

Two years ago we shortened the October, general season as well as cut back on Type 1 licenses. These changes were intended to improve buck quality some in the area during the November season. The Department would like to assess the impacts of these changes over a few years before making more changes. Also, many hunters in October simply want the opportunity to recreate and harvest any deer. A 3pt or better restriction significantly reduces their recreational opportunities. It is important to remember this deer herd is managed for recreational opportunity not trophy quality.

- o Make late season 3pt or better to increase odds of seeing 4pt or better

With only 50 licenses such a restriction is unlikely to matter much. This is particularly true since the vast majority of these license holders are trying to harvest a nice buck. Harvest of smaller bucks during the late season is insignificant.

- Increase research of elk movements

Several elk will be outfitted with satellite collars over the next several years to address this issue.

- Have youth hunts after the general deer season. 7 days

The Department increased youth hunting opportunities several years ago by allowing youth to harvest any deer in general areas.

- Concern about number of late season cow tags

See comments above. The 2015 proposal is to reduce Type 4 licenses by 100 and Type 6 licenses by 100.

Bears, Wolves, and Lions

- Large carnivores influencing elk movements (more info needed)
Several elk will be outfitted with satellite collars over the next several years to address this issue.
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- *Delist!!
- Concern about killing wolves may exacerbate issue

Group 3

ATVS

- Would like a way/regulation to be able to retrieve game.
Quartering game and carrying individual quarters back to the road is an effective, easy way to retrieve game without causing any resource damage or leaving new vehicle tracks.
 - o 300ft not enough
 - o May still cause resource damage. How much?
 - o Spread of invasive species
- People may not understand why rules are in place
 - o Education
 - o Younger hunters coming up
- Need voice from the public
- *Better ethics
 - o No concern
 - o Laziness
 - o Mandatory in Hunter Education as topic
- Enforcement, only a handful of citations given
 - o BLM \$175→\$225
 - o USFS \$200
- Lawyers plea out or reduce fines
- Increase penalties
See comments above.
- Do fines vary by state, park or are they the same agency (BLM, USFS) wide?
- Need to reach out to younger subset of ATV users

- Have State Trails go into the schools
 - Unless you have ethics, fines mean nothing
 - ATVs and animal disturbance
 - Off-road use has become socially acceptable
 - Like litter campaign “spotless suzie” helped
 - *Make a video showing damage, invasive species spread. We are a graphic world
 - Make some PSA’s
 - Some people will still continue to dislike regulation and fight it – period.
- All of these concerns/thoughts and recommendations will be supplied to the BLM, USFS and Trails Program.**

2014 Seasons and 2015 Recommendations

- HA 69 Type 6 talk about closing it to general but still having the cow/calf tags.
 - To actually increase harvest as we get lots of traffic without much harvest.
 - Oct 1 – Nov 30

This is the proposal for the 2015 season.
 - Shortened season (late) and reduced tags will help/work. Keep up for a couple years.
 - Saw more spikes this year
 - Deer season more towards end of October, would increase harvest of larger bucks
- For a year or two this would undoubtedly allow general license hunters to kill a bigger buck but it would quickly degrade quality due to intensive harvest.**

Bears, Wolves, and Lions

- Quota not often filled for lions. Not a problem, seasons good
 - Question: Why are baits (food used for bait) so restrictive when Brian stated “Bears aren’t attracted to humans as food just because they ate on a human”? Shouldn’t this hold true for bait foods?
 - Discourage food conditioned—dumpster—bears. The science varies
 - Hard to harvest a black bear without a bait in Dubois area
 - Publicize positives and hardships in living with carnivores—bears.
- The Department/Region is working on this and we provide a lot of information about Large Carnivores on our website and Regional Newsletters.**

Group 4

ATVs

- *Enforcement
- See everybody doing it
- Higher fines
- Presence

- Grapevine ticket
 - Trail cams
 - Increase signage and include fines
 - Grassroots committee (ala Mule Deer Group)
 - Pure deterrence
 - Outfitters concerned about confronting illegal users and “Hunter Harassment”
 - Rumors about tickets make it around town
 - More tolerated, worse it becomes
 - Enforce or drop it
 - If you don’t enforce, resource damage could get to point of USFS closing everything down
 - Need fences, road closure signs, etc. Put back up—*clean up resource
 - Public group to clean up resource
 - o May not keep some from doing
 - o May take a long time
 - Community culture of enforcement → Slack vs Strict
- All of these concerns/thoughts and recommendations will be supplied to the BLM, USFS and Trails Program.**

2014 Season and 2015 Recommendations

- Beautiful weather → tough hunting → not related to predators
 - Less cows
 - *Fear of killing resident cows
- To help avoid this, the Type 6 licenses open at a later date.**
- Concerns about too much late cow harvest
- Department personnel believe cow harvest levels have been appropriate in recent years. The 2015 season proposal does call for reducing antlerless elk licenses by 200.**
- Concerns about counting elk on our winter range but live on Res/outside CR
 - HA 68 best year ever
 - Support not hunting spikes for about 3 years
 - Would like 3pt or better and longer season (kids and workers)
 - **Two years ago we shortened the October, general season as well as cut back on Type 1 licenses. These changes were intended to improve buck quality some in the area during the November season. The Department would like to assess the impacts of these changes over a few years before making more changes. Also, many hunters in October simply want the opportunity to recreate and harvest any deer. A 3pt or better restriction significantly reduces their recreational opportunities. It is important to remember this deer herd is managed for recreational opportunity not trophy quality.**
 - Like any whitetail in deer general
 - Like buck quality + 50 tag on late

Bears, Wolves, and Lions

- Healthy predator population = healthy ungulate population → balance
- Favor legislative resolution of wolves
- Concern of virtual explosion of wolves\look forward to state management
- Increase in cats
- Increase carcass consumption this year
- Increased bears every year
- Bear numbers exploding
- Increase in bear habituation
- Increase in bear density and numbers
 - o Can't solo hunt
 - o Keep people out → spooked
 - o Fewer hunters
- Lack of return clients